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EAST TIMOR

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF MAUBERE RESISTANCE

NATIONAL LIBERATION ARMED FORCES OF EAST TIMOR

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Mr. Chairman,

Distinguished members of the Special Committee on Decolonization:

I have the honor to address this Committee on behalf of the people of East Timor.

It is with faith that I am addressing this prestigious United Nations body in the current international context. I believe to be appropriate to note that so many independent States were born in the shadows of the principles that are embodied in this Committee. These are the same principles that are inspiring the birth of new states in the Old Continent.

This Committee took upon itself the task of eradicating colonialism by the Year 2,000. With this promising vision the Special Committee on Decolonization asserts itself as the guardian of the hopes and aspirations of the peoples still under a backward system of domination.

In the decades that crowned the struggles for national liberation, this Committee was the forum for the defence of the international rights of the colonial countries and peoples. These historical achievements are our source of faith and hope and this is even more so with the approaching end of colonialism from the face of the Earth.

Mr. Chairman,

Distinguished members of the Special Committee on Decolonization:

With the inclusion of East Timor in 1960 on the UN GA List of Non-Self-Governing Territories, this Committee undertook total responsibility to see to it that the principles embodied in the Charter are fully applied to this territory.

In the history of the struggle against colonial expansionism, the oppressed peoples were always left with no alternative but to resort to violence to assert their rights in the face of the arrogant use of force by the colonizers. This is what happened to us when we were brutally invaded on 7 December 1975. Till this very day we are resisting the Indonesian criminal military occupation by all means available to us, including armed resistance.

However, we are in the midst of a historical whirlwind, underscored by political changes in various latitudes. Terrorist states have seen their very foundation smoldered by the democratic conscience of their citizens. Totalitarian regimes are now on the path towards the full respect for fundamental freedoms. Dictatorships in the Third World, installed by the West, are being overthrown in the face of popular protests. Humanity is indeed on the road towards a New World Order.

We have to continue to build a New World Order that is based on the elimination of all the evils that affect so many regions of this planet. This Committee, with only eight years ahead before the Year 2,000, has the daunting task of sweeping from the face of the Earth all the manifestations of colonialism.

Regrettably, some Member States use double standards on identical situations, namely, East Timor and Kuwait. Inspire of this, I am certain, the Special Committee on Decolonization will not betray the sacred principles that gave birth to it. We are also certain that in dealing with the question of East Timor it will be guided by International Law and all the relevant norms on self-determination and independence.

We are certain that East Timor will not be an exception in the decolonization process. Indonesia, a member of this august body, used it in the past as a forum to denounce Portuguese colonialism. Now again it is using this Committee as a forum to defend its own colonial aggression, annexation and military occupation of East Timor in complete disregard for the relevant Security Council Resolutions 384 (1975) and 389 (1976).

Mr. Chairman,

Distinguished members of the Committee:

It was only yesterday, so to speak, that the world was divided into two major military blocs, led by the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., both sides using at will the veto power to preserve their respective spheres of influence. We note with consternation that even after the dismantling of the old Soviet empire and the communist bloc, the West continues to make use of its veto power whenever just causes affect their economic interests.

The sanctions against Iraq seemed to suggest that gone is the taboo of state sovereignty and domestic jurisdiction; the measures adopted against Libya seem to suggest that the universal concept of justice should breach national boundaries when it comes to the application of universal principles; the Security Council resolutions on Yugoslavia seem to suggest that it now belongs to the past the notion that only the powerful and rich could determine the fate of peoples and that the universal principles of self-determination should prevail in time, in all latitudes and in all circumstances.

More than 200,000 dead and a continuing practice of persecution, imprisonment and massacres are the balance of more than 16 years of our resistance to Indonesia's military occupation of our country.

The 12 November 1991 massacre of East Timorese civilians jolted the international conscience. Some governments, even though accomplices in the physical, ethnic and cultural genocide of our people, were not able not able to hide their horror in the face of the Sta. Cruz massacre. However, a few months have elapsed, and their conscience slipped back to business as usual.

Much has been said about the 12 November 1991 massacre and the images of the massacre revealed the nature of the annexation of East Timor. 12 November underscored the historical fact that people's nationalism cannot be liquidated by repression, nor can it be alienated by so-called economic development. Namibia emerged as an independent state 40 years later. Small and large independent states whose right to self-determination and independence were denied blossomed 40 years later.

The referendum in the Baltic States were a model in conflict resolution. The world is shocked by the armed conflicts in Yugoslavia and Armenia. However, the international community is only harvesting the fruits of historical mistakes perpetrated by oppressive regimes that assaulted human conscience and regarded their fellow beings as mere pawns of the ambitions of the economic oligarchy to which they belonged.

A referendum process is now in preparation in Western Sahara. We are perplexed by the news that Indonesia reportedly offered a contingent to participate in the UN multinational force in Western Sahara.

Mr. Chairman,

Distinguished members of the Committee:

Indonesia claims that the people of East Timor have already chosen integration by "free will". If this is the case, then why so many

restrictions in East Timor? If this is so, why does it fear a ratification of the act under international supervision? If this is so, why did it create so many obstacles that aborted the projected Portuguese Parliamentary Mission to East Timor? Why did Indonesia close the territory following the 12 November massacre? Why are foreign visitors subjected to pro-Indonesia criteria? Why does East Timor remains closed to international humanitarian organizations?

Why all this if the people of East Timor chose by its free will integration with Indonesia? Why all this if, according to the Indonesian generals, only a few "marginal" continue to think about independence?

The new democracies, conscious that they are part of the community of nations, have shown political good will by inviting international supervision of their inaugural electoral processes. Why does the international community allows East Timor to remain a large prison? Is it because the people of East Timor wanted their island to be a prison?

Mr. Chairman,

Distinguished Members of the Special Committee on Decolonization:

I believe that in regard to East Timor, there are three fundamental resolutions that should be taken into consideration:

a. Security Council Res. 384 of 22 December 1975 and 389 of 26 April 1976 which, inter alia, reaffirm:

"the inalienable right of the people of East Timor to self-determination and independence in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter and the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples contained in General Assembly Res. 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960".

The above-mentioned resolutions called

"on all States to respect the territorial integrity of East Timor as well as the inalienable right of its people to self-determination in accordance with GA Res. 1514 (XV)"; and "...the government of Indonesia to withdraw without delay all its forces from the territory".

The Security Council finally called upon "all states and all interested parties to cooperate fully with the United Nations in its efforts to finding a peaceful solution to the prevailing situation and to facilitate the decolonization of the territory".

b. Yearly resolutions between 1975 and 1981 met with the indifference of the international community which in turn served only to encourage inflexibility on the part of Indonesia. In 1982, the General Assembly adopted Res. 37/30 which states and I quote:

"Recognizing the inalienable right of all peoples to self-determination and independence in accordance with the United Nations Charter and the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, contained in Res. 1514 (XV) of the General Assembly, of 14 December 1960,

"Requests the Secretary-General to initiate consultations with all parties directly concerned with a view to exploring the avenues for achieving a comprehensive settlement of the problem and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its 38th session".

Mr. Chairman,

Any solution to the problem of East Timor must be based on the respect for the expressed will of the people of East Timor. We are conscious of the fact that it is particularly difficult for the government of Indonesia a solution that put in question the

fundamental interests of the Indonesian state, but we cannot abdicate from our own interests and rights.

Dialogue is the means to solve conflicts. This is the trend in today's world. Indonesia herself continues to play an important role in the resolution of the Cambodian conflict. The whole argument of "internal affair" has been invoked time and again by the powerful. We witnessed it in the Gulf. What is happening in Yugoslavia, now focus of peace-making efforts by the UN and the EC, exposes the arrogance of those who continue to create obstacles to the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

Dialogue without pre-conditions preserves the mutual interests of the parties to the conflict. Both Portugal and the Maubere People are ready for dialogue. However, the government of Indonesia, enjoying the status as benefactor of Western economic and financial largesse, feels strong enough to reject the inclusion of the East Timorese themselves in the peace talks. We continue to invite Indonesia to round-table talks and we reaffirm our political will in endeavoring to find the best way to balance the interests of all parties to the conflict.

Portugal, the Administering power recognized by the UN, stands for a process of dialogue with the inclusion of the East Timorese, without pre-conditions.

Our flexibility regarding the involvement of the East Timorese aims at helping Portugal face the negotiation process seriously. It is the role of Portugal, legal Administering power of East Timor, in the context of its responsibilities, to work with the East Timorese towards finding formulas that might lead towards a comprehensive and lasting solution.

The Special Representative of the National Council of Maubere Resistance, Mr. Jose Ramos-Horta, conceived and outlined a set of

key-ideas with a view to contributing to a solution. I wish to elaborate on this plan.

Three elements emerge from this plan:

a. An extremely important element to emphasis, without any doubt, is the fact that the territory remains under UN responsibility until a final solution of the problem;

b. Concerning Portuguese role in the process, I believe that the role of Portugal has to be seen in the context of its commitment to engage in dialogue with Indonesia. Its role in the whole peace process is vital.

c. In accepting a transition situation and recognizing that a "de facto" situation exists in East Timor (Namibia was under South African domination and yet the UN did not relinquish its responsibilities), we wish to create favorable political conditions so that through democratic means and in a peaceful climate each party may persuade the people about the advantages of its policies. An act of self-determination, as the result and goal of this transition period, would be the true political act of free choice by our people.

I reaffirm our collective political will to abide by the popular verdict if the Maubere people, under international supervision, decide to opt for integration with the Republic of Indonesia.

We do not fight against Indonesia, we are not fighting against the people of Indonesia. We respect the great Indonesian nation, we respect our Indonesian brothers.

In an independent East Timor we will strive to have privileged relations of friendship and cooperation between our two peoples; we will strive to promote the instruments of bi-lateral and regional

cooperation in the framework of ASEAN. We will spare no effort to enhance ASEAN and its role in promoting political and economic cooperation as well as promoting the region as a zone of peace and prosperity.

An independent East Timor will seek membership with the South Pacific Forum. We share the same aspirations with the small island-states of the Pacific and we will strive to foster cooperation for the benefit of our peoples.

An independent East Timor will reject the existence of armed forces as our real contribution towards regional and world peace. We oppose militarization because we are against armed conflicts. We oppose militarization because as part of the Humanity that desires peace we do not fear our powerful neighbors. We oppose militarization because we believe the conscience of mankind opts for dialogue to resolve differences. If dialogue means democratic practice, if, above all, it is a concept of justice, if dialogue means respect for fundamental rights and freedoms of peoples, we are then against the use of force, we are against war, we are against oppression.

We are convinced that if all share the same convictions, Southeast Asia could become a model in the new world we all wish to build.

We hope that the Indonesian leaders understand our message of peace, our gesture of reconciliation and that our resistance is not aimed at the Indonesian state or people. In equal circumstances of rights and obligations we will know how to honor the friendship that the great Indonesian nation may offer us.

We appeal to the Special Committee on Decolonization to spare no effort to see to it that the UN relevant resolutions on East Timor are fully implemented.

Headquarters of the National Council of Maubere Resistance, in East Timor, 20 June 1992.

For the CNRM,

Kayrala Xanana Gusmao
Comandante das FALINTIL